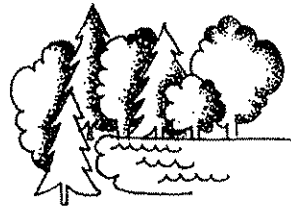


SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST, INC.

68 ½ Bennett Square • P.O. Box 600 • Southbury, CT 06488-0600
Telephone: (203)264-4441 • Email: email@southburylandtrust.org



March 26, 2009

To: Members of the Appropriations Committee

RE: OPPOSE BILL 828 RE DIVERSION OF CIA FUNDS

The Southbury Land Trust, along with land trusts around the state have made it a priority to preserve farmland because we realize how important it is to our communities, to our local economies, to our need for locally grown food, and to our heritage.

Thanks to funding from the Community Investment Act, we've made great progress in preserving important farmland. Now is not the time to cut the program.

With real estate values going down, farmland preservation funding will have greater purchasing power.

Diversion of CIA funds would cut Department of Agriculture staff and would mean that some great deals on farmland will fall through.

Cuts in state farmland funding will also mean that matching funds for as much as \$6 million in available federal money will be lost. Our state, our farmers, and our people can't afford this degree of lost opportunity.

The Community Investment Act funds many programs and projects around the state, providing jobs and improving the quality of life in Connecticut's cities and towns.

The fee that provides CIA funds was established for clearly defined purposes which were broadly supported by taxpayers. It should be kept in place for those purposes.

Thank you,

Tom Crider, President
The Southbury Land Trust, Inc.